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THE 2011 TOS SHADY VALLEY FORAY

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Abstract: The 2011 TOS Foray was held on 10-12 June in Shady Valley, Tennessee. This year marked the 50th anniversary of the first Foray there and the 35th anniversary of the last. The coverage area included the Beaverdam Creek drainage and the mountains that form the rim around Shady Valley. Twenty-three participants found 94 species. Highlights included Willow and Least Flycatchers, Red-breasted Nuthatch, a substantial population of Blackburnian Warblers, and Vesper and Savannah Sparrows. Comparisons are made to the 1976 Foray and to other observations from Shady Valley dating back to 1934.

INTRODUCTION

The 2011 Tennessee Ornithological Society (TOS) Foray was held on 10-12 June in Shady Valley, Tennessee. The Foray was hosted by the Bristol and Lee & Lois Herndon Chapters of TOS, with the cooperation of The Nature Conservancy. Wallace Coffey and Roy Knispel organized the Foray, with field work coordinated by Richard Knight. This year marked the 50th anniversary of the first TOS Foray held in Shady Valley in 1961 and the 35th anniversary of the last Foray there in 1976. While most TOS Forays have focused on an entire county, the Shady Valley Forays have concentrated on a smaller area. Results from the previous Shady Valley Forays are unpublished.

The first bird survey in Shady Valley was conducted during 5-8 June 1934 by Ganier and Tyler (1934). Their main focus was on the remnant areas of "swampy, partially wooded bogs" on the main valley floor. Therefore, their list of 59 species is missing several birds found in the higher elevations. Shortly afterwards, a field party from the U.S. National Museum spent 1-16 June 1937 in Shady Valley as part of a larger statewide survey of birds (Wetmore 1939). They worked areas from the valley floor to the surrounding mountain tops. Subsequent field work is summarized by Coffey and Shumate (1999).

The first TOS Foray to Shady Valley was organized by Ken Dubke and held during 17-18 June 1961, with 23 participants in attendance (Coffey and Shumate 1999). Similar forays were conducted on 23-24 June 1962, 7-9 June 1963, and 6-7 June 1964. Data from these forays was combined with other summer records from 1961 to 1964 into a summary of the summer status of 101 species in Shady Valley (Dubke 1966). Another TOS Foray was held in Shady Valley during 28-30 May 1976 (Coffey and Shumate 1999). It was hosted by the Bristol Bird Club and organized by Wallace Coffey, with 54 persons in attendance. Some data from the 1976 Foray, including a listing of the 95 species reported, was recovered from the Bristol Bird Club archives (Anonymous 1976). Comparisons to these earlier surveys are made in the species accounts below.

During the 2011 Foray, 23 participants worked in small groups, mostly by random birding of assigned areas. Daily lists were kept for each site with 22 lists collected, as well as a few miscellaneous sightings. The mountain tops were well covered, as birders hiked over 20 miles on the Appalachian Trail and Iron Mountain Trail. One BBS-style mini-route was run along lower Beaverdam Creek. It consisted of 15 stops along a route covered periodically since 1993 (Coffey and Shumate 1999). Little nocturnal birding was conducted. All records are incorporated into the accounts of the 94 species found on this Foray. The weather during the Foray was clear to partly cloudy, with early morning fog on the valley floor. Temperatures ranged from 56 - 88° F, as recorded at WCYB-TV5's weather station at Shady Valley School. A brief thunderstorm passed through during late afternoon on the 11th.

AREA DESCRIPTION

A high-elevation bowl, Shady Valley is located in Johnson County, the northeastern-most county in the state. It is situated in the Blue Ridge physiographic province, nestled between Holston, Cross, and Iron Mountains. The main valley floor is relatively flat to gently rolling, with an elevation of approximately 2800 ft. The western rim of the valley is formed by Holston Mountain (3384 to 4247 ft.), while the eastern rim is formed by Iron Mountain (3500 to 4236 ft.). Cross Mountain (3500 ft.) connects the two higher ridges along the southern rim.

Beaverdam Creek begins in the southern end of Shady Valley and drains northward. Flowing gently at first through the open valley, the creek gains momentum after passing Crandull and runs briskly through a narrow forested gorge, dropping to about 2040 ft. before entering Virginia and eventually emptying into the South Fork Holston River. The cool, moist micro-climate of the Beaverdam gorge attracts a few higher elevation birds; see the accounts for Winter Wren, Canada Warbler, and Dark-eyed Junco. The area covered on the 2011 Foray included the entire Beaverdam Creek drainage down to the state line and that portion of the three mountains forming the valley's rim.

Much of the forested mountainsides is in the Cherokee National Forest, with sections of the Appalachian Trail and Iron Mountain Trail providing access. Primarily deciduous, these forests are dominated by oaks (*Quercus* spp.), hickories (*Carya* spp.), and Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). Some stands contain pines (*Pinus* spp.) or eastern hemlock

(*Tsuga canadensis*), particularly in cove settings. *Rhododendron* is prominent in the understory. Before logging and stream channelization changed the character of the valley in the early 1900s, the valley floor was covered by forests of red spruce (*Picea rubens*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), and eastern hemlock, with extensive cranberry (*Vaccinium* sp.) bogs (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

The Nature Conservancy owns four preserves in Shady Valley totaling over 700 acres: Orchard Bog, Quarry Bog, Schoolyard Springs Preserve, and the John R. Dickey Birch Branch Sanctuary. Beneficial wetland and grassland restoration projects are ongoing at these Conservancy properties. Private farmland and yards in the main valley floor provide additional habitats. U.S. Highway 421 crosses Holston and Iron Mountains, bisecting the main valley. State Routes 91 and 133 run perpendicular to this highway, with S.R. 133 following Beaverdam Creek to the state line.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Results of the 2011 Foray are presented in comparison to data from the 1976 Foray (Anonymous 1976) and other historic avifaunal reports from Shady Valley (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Wetmore 1939, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) A group of eight was seen on 10 June in the main valley. This species is considered to be an uncommon permanent resident in Shady Valley, first reported in 1981, with breeding known since 1995 (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) A single bird was seen at Orchard Bog on 10 June, considerably fewer than expected given its status as a fairly common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported "many".

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) A dozen adults were seen at three sites in the open valley floor. Broods of four and ten ducklings were seen at Schoolyard Springs Preserve on 10 June and upper Beaverdam Creek on 12 June, respectively. This species was unrecorded in Shady Valley during the summer by Ganier and Tyler (1934) and Dubke (1966). It was not found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) report pairs present in 1998 and 1999. The first valley breeding record, consisting of two broods of young, was reported 23 June 2001 (J.W. Coffey, pers. comm.).

Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) Two adults and four young were found on Iron Mountain on 10 June, while a single adult was flushed on Holston Mountain on 11 June. This species is regularly encountered in forested areas (Coffey and Shumate 1999). Two were seen on the 1976 Foray.

Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) At least three single birds were observed on the Foray. A fairly common resident in recent years (Coffey and Shumate 1999), this species was not reported here by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Dubke (1966), or on the 1976 Foray.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) One or two were seen in the main valley floor on all three days. No evidence of breeding in Shady Valley has been reported. A nesting colony existed from 1998 through about 2008 at Damascus, Virginia, along Beaverdam Creek just north of the state line (Coffey and Shumate 1999, J.W. Coffey pers. comm.). It was unrecorded by Ganier and Tyler (1934) and Dubke (1966). Two were seen on the 1976 Foray.

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) A single bird was seen at Quarry Bog on 11 June, similar to the small numbers recorded in the past (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). Breeding was confirmed on 27 July 2001 (J.W. Coffey, pers. comm.). One was seen on the 1976 Foray.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) Two were seen together in the vicinity of Quarry Bog on 11-12 June. Ganier and Tyler (1934) did not find this species and Dubke (1966) reported just one summer sighting. The 1976 Foray recorded two. More recently it has become a fairly common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999), but nesting has not been noted.

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) Small numbers were seen daily, with a high count of 26 coming off a roost near Schoolyard Springs Preserve on 12 June. This is similar to previous reports (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray recorded nine.

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) Individuals were seen on opposite sides of the valley on 10 and 11 June. This species was not mentioned by Ganier and Tyler (1934) or Dubke (1966), but Wetmore (1939) recorded it on two days. A nest with eggs was found in 1939 by B. Tyler and R. Lyle as reported by Coffey and Shumate (1999), who considered it an uncommon resident. One was reported on the 1976 Foray.

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) A single bird on 11 June on Holston Mountain was the only Foray report. Dubke (1966) called it the most common hawk in summer, while Coffey and Shumate (1999) listed it as fairly common in that season. One was found on the 1976 Foray.

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) Four were seen, with two on the main valley floor and two on Holston Mountain. This species was not found by Ganier and Tyler (1934) or Wetmore (1939), while Dubke (1966) reported just one summer sighting. The 1976 Foray failed to find this species. Coffey and Shumate (1999) also considered it to be rare in spring and summer, citing only two recent records during these seasons.

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) Five birds were split between three sites in the main valley floor. Similar numbers have been reported by previous observers (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999), with breeding documented by the latter two references. Five were found on the 1976 Foray.

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) Six birds were encountered at two sites in the open valley. This species was not mentioned by Dubke (1966) or earlier reporters. Two were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) did not list any summer records and called it rare at other seasons.

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) A total of 27 were found in open areas of the main valley floor. This bird was considered to be common by all previous workers (Coffey and Shumate 1999). "Many" were seen on the 1976 Foray.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) Five were reported on the Foray. Ganier and Tyler (1934) found one. Dubke (1966) regarded it as regular, but sparse. The 1976 Foray reported two. Coffey and Shumate (1999) called it uncommon.

Eastern Screech-Owl (*Megascops asio*) Single screech-owls were heard at Orchard Bog and on Cross Mountain during the Foray. One was heard on the 1961 Foray (Dubke

1966), but it was not found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) considered it uncommon.

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) One was heard calling near Orchard Bog over two nights and another was seen on Holston Mountain. One was collected by the U.S. National Museum party (Wetmore 1939). Dubke (1966) reported a single encounter. It was not found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) described it as uncommon.

Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) A single bird was found on Cross Mountain in the pre-dawn of 12 June. Small numbers were reported by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Wetmore (1939), and Dubke (1966). Five were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) considered it to be an uncommon summer resident.

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*) Fifteen were found on the Foray. It was considered fairly common to common by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported "many".

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilocus colubris*) Fifteen were found on the Foray, while only five were reported on the 1976 Foray. Ganier and Tyler (1934) regarded it as fairly common, as did Coffey and Shumate (1999); but, Dubke (1966) declared it hard to find.

Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*) Four were seen at various sites along Beaverdam Creek. Ganier and Tyler (1934) failed to find this bird, but it was reported to them by valley residents. Dubke (1966) observed singles along the creek, while Coffey and Shumate (1999) considered it fairly common. Six were seen on the 1976 Foray.

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*) Foray participants found six, scattered from the mountain slopes to the main valley floor. This species was not recorded by Ganier and Tyler (1934) or Dubke (1966). The first valley sighting came in April 1973 (Coffey and Shumate 1999) and these authors considered it rare through the 1990s with only one summer record, plus one on the 1976 Foray. In Northeast Tennessee as a whole, this species is generally found in areas below 3000 ft. elevation (Knight 2008), but it is advancing into higher and more heavily forested areas.

Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*) Fairly common resident (Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999); nine found on Foray, with five reported on the 1976 Foray.

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) Slightly less common than the Downy (Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999); nine found on Foray, with 11 reported on the 1976 Foray. Stupka (1963) states that above 3500 ft. in the Smokies the Hairy outnumbers the Downy by about four to one; a ratio close to that seems to hold true in the mountains of Northeast Tennessee (pers. obs.).

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) Foray participants reported 11 at all elevations, but mainly in the lower valley. Ganier and Tyler (1934) considered it common, as did Coffey and Shumate (1999), with Dubke (1966) calling it the most common woodpecker at all elevations. Seven were found on the 1976 Foray.

Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*) Fifteen were found on the Foray. Ganier and Tyler (1934) saw only one or two pairs, but Dubke (1966) reported it as well distributed. Six were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) considered it to be fairly common.

Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*) Field parties reported a total of 45 from all elevations. It was considered to be at least fairly common by all previous reports (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). Nineteen were found on the 1976 Foray.

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*) Thirty-four were found, primarily in mountain coves and along lower Beaverdam Creek. Ganier and Tyler (1934) called it fairly common, as did Dubke (1966) and Coffey and Shumate (1999). The 1976 Foray reported only eight.

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) Foray participants located 14 in wetland sites along upper Beaverdam Creek, particularly in the two Nature Conservancy bogs. This species was first reported in Shady Valley in June 1960 (Coffey and Shumate 1999) and was fairly well distributed soon afterwards (Dubke 1966). A dozen were found on the 1976 Foray. Shady Valley, and Johnson County as a whole, remain as a stronghold for this species in Tennessee (Nicholson 1997).

Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*) Two were found during the Foray: one on 10 June in the valley floor on Winchester Road (2785 ft.) and the other on 11 June on the crest of Holston Mountain (3970 ft.) at the Johnson / Sullivan County line. The first summer records in Tennessee were reported in Shady Valley by Ganier and Tyler (1934), who described this species as fairly common in woodlands along Beaverdam Creek. However, Wetmore (1939) did not mention this species here or at any site in Tennessee. Only seven summer records have been reported in the Shady Valley area from the early 1960s through 2003 (Dubke 1966; Coffey and Shumate 1999; J.W. Coffey, pers. comm.). None were found on the 1976 Foray. In Northeast Tennessee, this species is a scarce summer resident away from its Roan Mountain stronghold (Knight 2008).

Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) Twelve were found, mainly along Beaverdam Creek and its tributaries. This species has been considered to be fairly common by all parties (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported ten.

Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) Only six were reported on the Foray from Holston Mountain and the valley floor. They were not found by Ganier and Tyler (1934), but Dubke (1966) regarded them as evenly distributed at all elevations. Coffey and Shumate (1999) called them fairly common. Nine were found on the 1976 Foray.

Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) Four were found on both the 2011 and 1976 Forays. This species was considered to be occasional in summer (Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) Field parties found 48 on the Foray, mostly on the mountain slopes, but also on the main valley floor and along lower Beaverdam Creek. Earlier workers described them as fairly common (Ganier & Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966), as do more recent observers (Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported 15.

Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) Ninety-seven were reported from all areas covered. All previous workers considered it to be common (Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported "many".

Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) Common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 18 found on Foray, with "many" reported on the 1976 Foray.

American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) Common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 43 found during Foray, with 18 reported on the 1976 Foray.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) Six were reported on the Foray, with some possible overlap. This species was not encountered by any of the early workers (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Wetmore 1939, Dubke 1966). One seen during the 1976 Foray appears to be the earliest published report from Shady Valley. Coffey and Shumate (1999) described it as an uncommon permanent resident. A nest was discovered on 16-17 May 2001 at the John R. Dickey Birch Branch Sanctuary on a cliff face over Beaverdam Creek along State Route 133 (J.W. Coffey, A. Trently, T. Ettell, fide Coffey, pers. comm.). The regional population has grown and expanded its range in recent years (Knight 2008).

Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*) Forty-two were found in open areas of the valley floor and on lower slopes. These swallows occupied several nest boxes near homesites. Dubke (1966) had a few late May or early June sightings in the early 1960s of one or two Tree Swallows near some suitable nest snags, but no indication of nesting. It was not recorded on the 1976 Foray. Breeding was first noted in Shady Valley in 1990 (Coffey and Shumate 1999), four years after the first confirmed breeding in Northeast Tennessee (Knight 2008). This species is now equally as common as Barn Swallows in Shady Valley.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) Foray participants reported 40 birds, with nests found in at least one barn. Ganier and Tyler (1934) found at least six nesting pairs, while Dubke (1966) called it regular. The 1976 Foray reported "many". This species continues to be a common summer resident of the open areas of the valley (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Carolina Chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*) Common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 19 found on Foray, with 16 reported on the 1976 Foray.

Tufted Titmouse (*Baeolophus bicolor*) Fairly common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 24 found on Foray, with 12 reported on the 1976 Foray.

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*) A single bird was found on 11 June at approximately 3400 ft. elevation on McQueen Gap Road in deciduous-dominated mixed forest with only a few large white pines. There are no previous summer records for Shady Valley or its mountain rim (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*) Fairly common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 26 found on Foray, with seven reported on the 1976 Foray.

Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) Fairly common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); only 14 found on Foray (numbers likely reduced by two straight winters of extended snow cover), with 'many' reported on the 1976 Foray.

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) A total of 26 were reported on the Foray, mainly near residential areas of the main valley floor. Tyler and Lyle (1947) first reported the species in Shady Valley in 1947, including a nest with two eggs. Dubke(1966) regarded it as regular, with a max of four singing males. Only three were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) noted a significant increase in the 1990s.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) A single bird was found on 11 June at approximately 3200 ft. elevation on McQueen Gap Road. This is slightly below the expected elevational range for the breeding season in Northeast Tennessee (Knight 2008); but, it is in an area where the species has occurred previously, including one on the 1976 Foray (Coffey and Shumate 1999). Furthermore, there are four June records of singing males along lower Beaverdam Creek at elevations of 2300 - 2500 ft (Coffey and Shumate 1999). These may represent the lowest elevation summer records in the state.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*) Only two were found on the Foray, with singles at Schoolyard Springs and Crandull. Ganier and Tyler (1934) failed to find it and Dubke (1966) considered it rare. Two were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) considered it to be occasional in summer, with breeding documented in 1991.

Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) Foray participants found 21 in open areas of the main valley and on lower slopes up to 3500 ft. Ganier and Tyler (1934) called it fairly common, as did Dubke (1966) and Coffey and Shumate (1999). The 1976 Foray reported just seven.

Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*) Field parties found 35, all at elevations above 3500 ft. This species was not reported by Ganier and Tyler (1934) or Dubke (1966). The report of six on the 1976 Foray apparently was the first for the coverage area (Coffey and Shumate 1999). The Veery has since increased on these mountain tops and is considered common there today (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) Thirty-four were reported from all elevations. This species was considered fairly common to common by Ganier and Tyler (1943), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999). Observers found 14 on the 1976 Foray.

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) Common summer resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 78 found on Foray, with "many" reported on the 1976 Foray.

Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) Twenty were distributed at all elevations. It has been considered fairly common by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999). Twelve were reported on the 1976 Foray.

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) Foray participants found 12, all in the main valley floor. Wetmore (1939) reported this species, but Ganier and Tyler (1934) did not. Dubke (1966) listed only two sightings. Three were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) call it uncommon.

Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) Twenty-one were reported, mainly from the valley floor. Previous accounts considered it fairly common (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported 17.

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) Common resident (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Coffey and Shumate 1999); 50+ found on Foray, with "many" reported on the 1976 Foray.

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) Thirty-five were reported from all elevations, with the majority in the valley floor. A nest with eggs was found at Orchard Bog. Ganier and Tyler (1934) saw only three, but subsequent writers considered it fairly common (Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). Seventeen were found on the 1976 Foray.

Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) Foray participants tallied 125, mainly on the mountains and along lower Beaverdam Creek. This was overwhelmingly the most numerous warbler

found during the 2011 Foray. It was also the most common warbler on the 1976 Foray, with 33. Other workers reported it as fairly common to abundant (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Wetmore 1939, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) Only two were found during the foray. While Ganier and Tyler (1934) did not mention this species, Dubke (1966) referred to it as regular and Coffey and Shumate (1999) called it common. Several were found during the 1976 Foray, but the number was not recorded.

Louisiana Waterthrush (*Parkesia motacilla*) Five were found during the Foray, all along lower Beaverdam Creek. Others may have been missed because the main song period for this species ends earlier. Previous accounts considered it to be fairly common (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). Several were found during the 1976 Foray, but the number was not recorded.

Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) Thirty-three were reported from all elevations. Although Ganier and Tyler (1934) did not find this species, it was reported by Wetmore (1939). Dubke (1966) listed it as well distributed. Coffey and Shumate (1999) described it as fairly common. Five were found on the 1976 Foray.

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) One was noted singing on 10 - 11 June along lower Beaverdam Creek. The U.S. National Museum party was the first to find this species in Shady Valley (Wetmore 1939). Dubke (1966) called it regular along lower Beaverdam Creek, as did Coffey and Shumate (1999), who report a few additional locations on the lower slopes of surrounding mountains. The 1976 Foray reported one. A one-day high count of seven came from lower Beaverdam Creek on 10 May 1981 (Eller 1981).

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) Foray participants found 13, mostly on the main valley floor. Ganier and Tyler (1934) described it as common in the bogs, as do Dubke (1966) and Coffey and Shumate (1999). Ten were reported on the 1976 Foray.

Hooded Warbler (*Setophaga citrina*) Sixty-five were found at all elevations. Although Ganier and Tyler (1934) found just one, later observers considered it to be very common (Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported 11.

American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) A single party reported 12 along the crest of Holston Mountain. Apparently the first summer record for Shady Valley came in June 1963 (Dubke 1966). Relatively few other summer records exist (Coffey and Shumate 1999), with none found on the 1976 Foray. Thus, the current report is significant.

Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*) Foray participants found 11, mainly along lower Beaverdam Creek. Ganier and Tyler (1934) considered it common and Dubke (1966) called it regular at all elevations. Coffey and Shumate (1999) called it fairly common. Only 3 were reported on the 1976 Foray.

Blackburnian Warbler (*Setophaga fusca*) A total of 21 was reported by six different parties from the summits of Holston Mountain and Iron Mountain in oak-dominated forest above 3500 ft. Wetmore (1939) described this species as common in the same areas and Dubke (1966) said they occurred regularly on the higher ridges. Earlier, Ganier and Tyler (1934) reported four in remnant spruce forest in the valley floor. Five were reported on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) cite only six other summer records between

1966 and 1998, perhaps reflecting insufficient coverage in the proper off-road areas. Foray sightings came from the same habitat type in which Blackburnians occur in their limited Cumberland Mountain range (Nicholson 1997), while those in the Great Smoky Mountains are most common in the higher elevation spruce-fir forests (Stupka 1963, Alsop 1991). Based on Breeding Bird Atlas data, the species was described as "the rarest warbler regularly nesting in the state" (Nicholson 1997:285). The number of Blackburnians found on this Foray apparently represents the largest known population in Tennessee outside the Smokies and is the single most significant finding on the 2011 Foray.

Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) Foray participants found 3 at Quarry Bog. Suitable habitat at other sites was apparently vacant. Ganier and Tyler (1934) reported six to eight birds and Dubke (1966) considered the species to be regular in the lower elevations. Eleven were recorded on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) called it fairly common. Current wetland restoration should benefit this species.

Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) Twenty-two were found at all elevations, but most commonly on the higher slopes. Early workers regarded it as fairly common (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966), while Coffey and Shumate (1999) describe it as common. The 1976 Foray reported ten.

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Setophaga caerulescens*) Foray participants found 67 at all elevations. Although not mentioned by Ganier and Tyler (1934), it was considered common by Wetmore (1939), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999). The 1976 Foray reported 28. In the Smokies, Stupka (1963) reports this species normally breeding above 2800 ft., but notes a few sites where they nest down to 2400 ft. However, in Shady Valley this species regularly breeds along lower Beaverdam Creek down to about 2160 ft. at Backbone Rock (Coffey and Shumate 1999, pers. obs.).

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*) Thirty-two were found at all elevations. Not mentioned by Ganier and Tyler (1934), although Dubke (1966) and Coffey and Shumate (1999) regard it as common. Several were found on the 1976 Foray, but the number was not recorded.

Canada Warbler (*Setophaga canadensis*) Foray participants found 19. Most occurred above 3500 ft. on Iron and Holston Mountains, while five were found along lower Beaverdam Creek at elevations of 2200 to 2500 ft. Coffey and Shumate (1999) report one in the same area on 16 June 1996, plus another at 2700 ft on 22 May 1994 (possibly a late migrant). Also, one was found on 8 June 2004 along lower Beaverdam Creek at 2260 ft. (J.W. Coffey, pers. comm.). Only two were reported on the 1976 Foray, at just over 2900 ft on Sluder Road. Dubke (1966) found them only at the higher elevations, where Coffey and Shumate (1999) listed them as occasional in summer. Typically, they breed above 3500 ft. in Northeast Tennessee (Knight 2008).

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) Three were found, with two near Crandull and one on Cross Mountain Road at 3500 ft. Ganier and Tyler (1934) considered it fairly common. Dubke (1966) listed it as regular in the lower elevations, while Coffey and Shumate (1999) called it uncommon and harder to find. The 1976 Foray reported 5.

Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythropthalmus*) Fifty-seven were reported from all elevations.

Previous workers have considered it to be fairly common (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported 37.

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) Twenty-five were found, mostly in the main valley floor, but a few occurred in open areas up to 3500 ft. All authors have considered it to be common (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported 14.

Field Sparrow (*Spizela pusilla*) Eighteen were reported, mostly from the main valley floor. It was regarded as common to fairly common by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999). The 1976 Foray reported 23.

Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*) A single bird was seen on 10 & 12 June at Orchard Bog. This species was regarded as fairly common in Shady Valley by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Wetmore (1939), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999), but it apparently has declined in recent years. Seven were found on the 1976 Foray.

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) A single bird was seen and heard singing on 10 & 12 June at Orchard Bog, with a separate pair seen in the same field on the latter date. The first summer record in Shady Valley occurred in 1991 (Coffey and Shumate 1999), with a few subsequent summer records (pers. obs.). Breeding is apparently undocumented at this location. This species is regarded as an uncommon and local summer resident in Northeast Tennessee since 1987 (Knight 2008).

Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) Two singing males and another adult were found at Orchard Bog on 10 & 12 June. Ganier and Tyler (1934) reported two, while Wetmore (1939) described it as fairly common. Dubke (1966) found this species at only a few sites in the valley floor. None were found on the 1976 Foray. Coffey and Shumate (1999) considered it to be fairly common.

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) Common resident (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Coffey and Shumate 1999); 52 found on Foray, with 60 reported on the 1976 Foray.

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) Foray participants reported 69, all but one from above 3500 ft. in the mountains. The other individual was a singing male on lower Beaverdam Creek at about 2300 ft. elevation. Coffey and Shumate (1999) have found juncos at 2200 to 2380 ft. in the same area since 1995. A characteristic bird of the highest elevations, Stupka (1963) described this species as breeding down to about 3000 ft. in the Smokies, but reported a few down to 2600 ft along a couple of watersheds. The U.S. National Museum party collected specimens from both Iron and Holston Mountains (Wetmore 1939). However, Dubke (1966) found it only on Iron Mountain. Coffey and Shumate (1999) reported additional records from Holston Mountain since 1969 and it is currently common there and on Iron Mountain above 3500 ft. The 1976 Foray reported eight juncos.

Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) Twenty-four were reported from all elevations. It has been considered to be fairly common by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999). The 1976 Foray reported 26.

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) Common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 26 found on the Foray, with "many" reported on the 1976 Foray.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) Eight were found, all above 3500 ft on Iron and Holston Mountains. Wetmore (1939) reported this species from both mountains. Coffey and Shumate (1999) described it as an occasional summer resident, with only a few records in the 1960s. Eighteen were reported on the 1976 Foray.

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*) Two individuals were found, a female at Orchard Bog on 11 June and a singing male at Schoolyard Springs Preserve on 12 June. This species was first reported in Shady Valley in 1991 and has been encountered only occasionally since, with nesting undocumented (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) Sixty-nine were reported from all elevations. It was considered common by all previous workers (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966, Coffey and Shumate 1999). The 1976 Foray reported 43.

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) Common summer resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 84 found on Foray, with 45 reported on the 1976 Foray.

Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) Foray participants reported 17 from grasslands in the main valley floor, but the species is known to occur on the lower slopes up to 3500 ft (pers. obs.). This species was described as common by Ganier and Tyler (1934), Dubke (1966), and Coffey and Shumate (1999). Twenty-two were found on the 1976 Foray.

Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) Common summer resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 176 found on Foray, with 72 reported on the 1976 Foray.

Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) Only six were found during the Foray. This species was not reported by Ganier and Tyler (1934), but was found by the U.S. National Museum party (Wetmore 1939). It was described as regular by Dubke (1966) and common by Coffey and Shumate (1999). The 1976 Foray reported just three.

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) Eight were reported near residential areas. First found in Shady Valley about 1980, it was common by the following decade (Coffey and Shumate 1999).

American Golfinch (*Carduelis tristis*) Common resident (Coffey and Shumate 1999); 44 found on the Foray, with 13 reported on the 1976 Foray.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) Twenty-six were found around human habitation on the valley floor. A similar number (25) occurred on the 1976 Foray. Early workers called it common (Ganier and Tyler 1934, Dubke 1966), while Coffey and Shumate (1999) report that it has declined in recent decades.

COMMENTS

Fifteen species reported on the 1976 Foray, with number recorded, were not found in 2011: Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) - 21, American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) - 1, Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) - 1, Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) - 1, White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*) - 4, Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*) - 1, Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*) - 3, Purple Martin (*Progne subis*) - 3, Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) - 4, Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*) - 2, Prairie Warbler (*Setophaga discolor*) - 1, Bay-breasted Warbler (*Setophaga castanea*) - 3,

Cerulean Warbler (*Setophaga cerulea*) - 5, Kentucky Warbler (*Geothlypis formosus*) - 3, and Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) - 2.

Two of these were obviously late migrants: Gray-cheeked Thrush and Bay-breasted Warbler. The report of Cerulean Warblers from a single observer was regarded as uncomfirmed (Anonymous 1976). Northern Bobwhite and Horned Lark have declined significantly in recent years and may have vanished as nesting species in the valley. The remaining ten species were uncomfirmed, sporadic, or low-density breeders at the time of the 1976 Foray. They may have been absent from the valley or could have been missed on the current Foray.

Fourteen species found on the Foray in 2011 were not reported in 1976: Canada Goose, Mallard, Wild Turkey, Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Least Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Redstart, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, and House Finch. These are discussed in the respective species accounts.

Foray participants: Jim Anderson, Rob Biller, Kevin Bowden, Kathleen Britts, Ruth Clark, Mary Clark, Wallace Coffey, Carolyn Coffey, Jennifer Connors, Ken Dubke, Glen Eller, Sylvia Fraust, Betty Hamilton, Tom Hunter, Nata Jackson, Richard Knight, Roy Knispel, Brookie Potter, Jean Potter, Mike Sanders, Michele Sparks, Michele von Bergen, Melinda Welton.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to the following for their contributions toward a successful Foray. Wallace Coffey and Roy Knispel directed the Foray. Gabby Call and Charles McQueen facilitated use of The Nature Conservancy properties. Dave Dierks provided temperatures recorded in the valley. The Bristol Bird Club provided drinks and snacks; Janice Martin handled the purchase of these items. Coffey read a draft of the manuscript and provided additional records. I thank the participants for their careful observations.

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The Migrant 82(3): 111-114, 2011

MID-SOUTH RAPTOR CENTER REHABILITATION PROGRAM: A TEN YEAR REVIEW 1992 -2002

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The Mid-South Raptor Center (formerly the Raptor Rehabilitation Program located at the Memphis Zoo) sees an average of 150 to 200 injured and orphaned birds of prey every year. Roughly 60% of these birds are released into the wild after treatment or after becoming self-sustaining. During the early days of avian rehabilitation there was disagreement as to the need for this service. A common argument was to "let nature take its course." Many felt it was not possible for an injured bird to be rehabilitated to the extent that it could survive after being held for treatment and then released. The same was believed for young; if they did not have the upbringing by their natural parents they would not be able to adjust to surviving in the wild, and therefore, no effort should be made to raise them in a captive setting.

Since the goal of the raptor program is to release rehabilitated and orphaned birds back into the wild, we felt we had a responsibility to show this could be accomplished successfully. To monitor the birds after release each bird was banded. The bands are strictly controlled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and are available only to persons holding a master banding permit. Every one of our released birds is banded by long-time volunteer Martha Waldron. When a band is recovered it allows us to determine many factors, including the length of time the bird survived after release and how far it had traveled after release. At times we could also determine what caused the death of the bird, such as collision with a car, gunshot, window strike, etc.

As shown in Table 1, a total of 784 individual birds, representing fourteen species of raptors, were banded and released from 1992 through 2002. Five-hundred and twenty-seven of these were either rehabilitated or raised after being orphaned. An earlier article (Martin, 1996) noted birds were released with similar distribution of hawks and owls respectively. During this timeframe there was a single Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and a number of Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*); but the most common species were American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) (150 released); Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) (102 released); Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicacensis*) (102 released); and Eastern Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) (93 released).

It should be noted that from the early 1980's the Memphis Zoo and Aquarium was involved in a program with the Kansas Department of Parks and Wildlife that resulted in Mississippi Kites (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) being transferred to the Memphis area for

reintroduction. Once common in the area, the number of kites had decreased dramatically over the years. During the eleven years of this study 157 kites were brought in from Kansas, banded and released by the Raptor Rehabilitation Center.

The main difficulty in determining the success rate of the released birds is that so few bands are recovered. In the eleven years of this study only four bands were returned of the 784 birds banded and released. One was an Eastern Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) that was released on the grounds of the Memphis Zoo and Aquarium in July 1998 and recovered after being struck by a car in late November of the same year. While this is only a single return and can by no means be used to prove the importance of banding, a couple of points can be made. First, this was an orphaned bird that was able to survive for four months, which means it was hunting and killing prey on its own though it had been raised by humans and not its parents. Second, the bird was found within a mile of the original release sight. A second owl, a Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) was released near Turrell, Arkansas and was recovered months later in Marion, Arkansas, very near the original release site. These two recoveries are consistent with the original study that indicates owls are more likely to stay near the original release site rather than moving great distances away. Hawks seem to disperse widely when released. The other two recovered bands were both from Red-tailed Hawks that were released in different parts of Shelby County. Both were recovered in Tipton County.

Though we received only four band returns of the birds released during this eleven year period, the Memphis Zoo and Aquarium received four injured birds banded elsewhere. Two were Red-tailed Hawks banded in Wisconsin; a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii)* also banded in Wisconsin; and a Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) that had been banded on the nest the year before in Michigan. As stated earlier, it appears hawks are much more likely to travel great distances from their release sites. This is certainly true of these four individuals that all traveled hundreds of miles south from their release sites. Another point to note is that the bird banded on the nest showed no ill effects from being banded.

While this is by no means a scientific study, by comparing the two time periods that cover a span of over twenty years it appears that raptor numbers seem to be stable, and in some instances, improving. Numbers for the five hawk species most regularly seen by the center are stable. The same is true for the four common owl species. Considering the continuing loss of habitat this is a good sign. American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) numbers have almost doubled (83 to 150) during this time frame, which is a good sign as the numbers of this small falcon have dropped in other areas of the country. Another interesting observation concerns the status of the Bald Eagle (*Aquila leucucephalus*) and the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrunus*). Before the Endangered Species Act became law in 1973 the number of Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons had fallen to historic lows, and none of either species were recorded in the initial study. However, in the second study four falcons and four eagles were recorded.

While these observations only reflect raptor populations in Memphis/Shelby County area, it will be interesting to see how subsequent release data correlates with previous records locally and concurrently on a regional or national level.

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Editor's note: This article is part of a study based upon ten-year increments.

BANDING TOTALS - 1992-2002

SPECIES	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	TOTAL	Total '81-'91
Turkey Vulture												0	1
Golden Eagle	1											1	1
Mississippi Kite	1		1	1		1	4	3	5			16	5
MIKI "Kansas Kites"	21	11	18	11	21	13	14		20	4	24	157	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	1						3			6	1
Cooper's Hawk				1	2	1	4		1	2	4	15	5
Bald Eagle					1	1		1	1			4	0
Northern Harrier												0	2
Northern Goshawk												0	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	2					1			1	1	2	7	7
Broad-winged Hawk	1			1					1	1		4	12
Red-tailed Hawk	16	7	8	7	13	9	11	6	11	9	5	102	66
Barn Owl	8	11	9	19	10	13	16	8	2	1	5	102	56
Eastern Screech Owl	13	3	9	4	5	9	6	14	15	9	6	93	104
Great Horned Owl	5	11		8	5	3	7	5	1	6	3	54	51
Barred Owl	7	4	8	5	8	2	7	3	4	5	9	62	56
N. Saw-whet Owl												0	1
American Kestrel	14	13	10	7	17	12	19	8	18	14	18	150	83
Peregrine Falcon	1	7*	1	1						1		11	0
TOTAL	91	61	65	65	82	65	88	48	83	53	76	784	452

*Five of the seven falcons were purchased and hacked in downtown Memphis.

SECOND RECORD OF CLAPPER RAIL

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On 28 September 2005, wildlife rehabilitator Lou Anne Parington contacted me regarding an injured rail in her care. The rail initially was picked up 23 September 2005 in Hamilton County by the Department of Animal Services. Animal services reportedly sent the bird to Warner Park Zoo for rehabilitation, and they then placed the bird with Ms. Parington.

A veterinary examination revealed that the bird had a badly broken wing and a leg injury which prevented walking. Several days of treatment proved to be ineffective, and the bird was euthanized. The carcass was temporarily acquired by the author of this article, prepared as a study skin and transferred to Dr. David Aborn to be placed in the bird skin collection at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga. It is likely significant that the bird was found after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast.

The lack of rich brown on the wings, breast and neck as well as the overall drab coloration eliminates a King Rail. The relatively large size eliminates Virginia Rail. Digital photographs of the carcass are on file with the Tennessee Bird Records Committee.

This is the second record of a Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris)*. The first record was 8 April 1986; that bird was captured, photographed and released 17 April 1986.

Editor's note: The details of this historical record are previously unpublished. The editors have chosen to include this because of its historical importance.

LAZULI BUNTING IN SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE

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On the evening of 3 May 1996, I received a call from Jeff R. Wilson stating that he had found a female Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*) along the east levee of The EARTH Complex (generally known to birders as "the pits"), in the Ensley Bottoms area of southwest Shelby County. I arrived at the general location around 1:30 pm on 4 May 1996 and began searching for the bird. Around 2:00 pm I located the bird in a mixed flock of Indigo Buntings (*Passerina cyanea*) and a few Blue Grosbeaks (*Passerina caerulea).* I observed the bird off and on for about 20 minutes from a distance of 10-20 yards with Zeiss 10x40 binoculars and a Bushnell Spacemaster 22x scope.

This bird was small, almost identical in size to the Indigo Buntings with which it was feeding in the tall grass. It was buff-gray above with a light powder-blue rump. The bird had an unstreaked breast that was a warm buff color, and the belly and undertail coverts were white. There was no streaking on the sides of the bird as there was on the female Indigo Buntings seen in direct comparison. The throat was the same color as the face. On the female Indigo Buntings, the throat was lighter colored than the face. The wings were a darker brown with two pale wingbars, the upper more distinct than the lower. The wingbars were lighter and more distinct than those of a female Indigo Bunting. The tail was about the same color of the wings, with a very small hint of blue in the outermost tail feathers. This bird was distinctive even as it flew amongst the flock of Indigo Buntings because the color was more of a buff-gray than it was brown. It was also different from a female Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) which has a greenish overall tone.

The bird was seen again on the afternoon of 4 May 1996 by Jeff R. Wilson in the same general area. This record was accepted by the Tennessee Bird Records Committee (Todd 2005) and placed on the Provisional List.

LITERATURE CITED

Todd, Michael (2005). Report of the Tennessee Bird Records Committee, *Migrant* 76:91-93.

Editor's note: The details of this sighting are previously unpublished. The editors have chosen to include this because of its historical importance.

BOOK REVIEW

Feathers: the Evolution of a Natural Miracle - Thor Hansen. 2011. Basic Books, Philadelphia, PA. 336 pages.

Not a bird identification guide, *Feathers* is an entertaining and educational synthesis of the history of feather study including paleontology, flight evolution, avian anatomy and physiology, as well as mankind's use of feathers for such purposes as adornment, insulation, and aviation design. All this is interspersed with witty anecdotes about Hanson's own scientific investigations such as the finer points of plucking a defrosted Winter Wren in order to observe feather types and growth patterns.

The author recounts fossil stories beginning with the 1861 Solnhofen archeopteryx traded by an unnamed stonecutter in payment for medical bills right up to the recent discoveries of feathered theropods in the Yixian Formation of China.

The development of avian evolution theories is discussed starting with 19th century biologist Thomas Huxley. The author lightheartedly relates his informal phone interviews with the more contemporary big-name researchers Ostrom, Feduccia, Prum, and Xu Xing. Both sides of the ground-up/tree-down controversy are presented, including Ken Dial's wing-assisted incline running model.

No attempt is made to favor any one argument over another, but instead to provide an overview which leaves the reader with an appreciation of the staggering complexity of the issues and just how much remains unanswered.

In the very next section Hanson may again be recounting other research tidbits gleaned from touring a feather forensics lab or a Seattle down processing plant, or simply musing with wonderment upon observing young yard pullets learning to scratch, cluck, and flap their short, stubby wings.

Each chapter begins with a literary or lyrical quotation either ancient or modern. The book contains numerous images of historic and contemporary plates that illustrate the myriad of concepts explored.

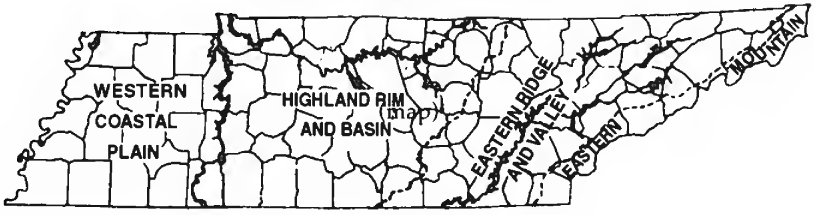
Hanson presents his vast scope of information with the "wow" factor of a seventh grader in the science lab and leaves the reader with renewed appreciation of birds and feather study. No shortcomings were identified, and certainly no reader of *The Migrant,* who can relate to having window-kill in zip lock bags in the freezer next to the lima beans could possibly become bored by this book -- cover to cover.

Thor Hanson is a conservation biologist and holds a doctorate through the University of Idaho and the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza, Costa Rica.

Gaynell Perry, Bartlett, Tennessee

THE SUMMER SEASON

Richard L. Knight, Editor



1 June - 31 July 2011

Excessive heat ruled the scene for the second straight summer. Many locations approached or set records for the number of days with 90+ degrees. Also like last summer, the extreme heat apparently kept many observers indoors. Rainfall was near normal or only slightly below normal in most areas.

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks and Western Kingbirds continue to thrive in Shelby County. A northward movement of Neotropic Cormorants reached Northwest Tennessee, with others occurring in Kentucky and Arkansas. It was a banner nesting season for Black-necked Stilts in Mississippi River border counties, but tough for Least Terns. A possible Anhinga nest on an island in Percy Priest Lake was well away from expected range. Two more "Great White Herons" were found in East Tennessee, bringing the state total up to a dozen. Pending acceptance, a Hooded Oriole in Lincoln County would provide a state first.

With a report this summer at Roan Mountain and recent occurrences in western North Carolina, Swainson's Thrush appears to be the next boreal breeder to be expanding its range southward along the Appalachians, following Alder Flycatcher, Hermit Thrush, Magnolia Warbler, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. What is driving this phenomenon, which seems to run the opposite of what one would expect with the recent climate change patterns?

Standard Abbreviations

ad - adult
Co – County
Cr - Creek
ers - earliest reported sighting
et al. - and others
fide – reported by
im – immature
Is – Island
L - Lake
lrs - latest reported sighting
max - maximum count
m.ob - many observers
Mtn - Mountain
NWR – National Wildlife Refuge
R - River
SP – State Park
WMA – Wildlife Management Area
yg - young

WESTERN COASTAL PLAIN REGION - - June and July were marked by record or near record high temperatures throughout the region and throughout the period. Rainfall was less than normal by an inch or two, although the total for the year to date is above average owing to the spring rains that caused flooding of the "Big Muddy".

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks and Black-necked Stilts continue to increase, as do Western Kingbirds, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and mixed pairs of these two Tyrannids. Summering White Pelicans were present in large numbers in the northwest portion of the region. There were five separate reports of Neotropic Cormorant in Dyer and Lake Counties. A Bell's Vireo away from Reelfoot Lake or the banks of the Mississippi River was a good find.

Duck - Coot: **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**: thru season, max 2 Jun (58), 17 / 30 Jul (2 broods of 3 and 18 yg) Ensley (JRW). **Snow Goose**: 10 Jun (1, blue morph) White L. Refuge (WGC), could fly well. **American Black Duck**: 2-5 Jun (1 female) Ensley (JRW). **Blue-winged Teal**: 4 Jun (9) Lake Co (WGC, JRW); 5 Jun / 4 Jul (2) Ensley (JRW); 30 Jun (1) White L. Refuge (WGC). **Northern Shoveler**: 5 Jun (2) Ensley (JRW); 3-16 Jul (2 males) Mud L, Lake Co (WGC, JRW). **Ring-necked Duck**: 4 Jun (2) Lake Co (JRW). **Ruddy Duck**: 4 Jun (2) Dyer Co (WGC, JRW); 5 Jun / 28 Jul (11 / 6) Robco L, Shelby Co (JRW). **Pied-billed Grebe**: 14 Jun (2) White L. Refuge (WGC); 26 Jun (1) Mud L., Lake Co (WGC). **American White Pelican**: 4 Jun (125) Lake Co (WGC, JRW); 6 Jun (83) Hwy 104W near Great River Rd, Dyer Co (WGC); 11 Jun (45) Moss Is WMA, Dyer Co (WGC). **NEOTROPIC CORMORANT**: 12 Jun (2) White L Refuge (WGC); 19 Jun (1) Phillipy Pits, Lake Co (WGC, JRW); 10-16 Jul (1-2) Obion R at Great River Rd, Dyer Co (WGC, JRW); 12 Jul (1) Mud L, Lake Co (Mike Todd); 16 Jul (1) Moss Is WMA, Dyer Co (WGC, JRW). **Double-crested Cormorant**: 1 Jun (100) Robinson Bayou Rd, Dyer Co (WGC). **Anhinga**: thru Jun (1 active nest) Ensley (JRW); 26 Jun (3 males) White L Refuge (WGC); 31 Jul (1 ad, 1 im) Mud L, Shelby Co (JRW). **Least Bittern**: 15 Jul (1) TVA Lake, Shelby Co (JRW). **Little Blue Heron**: 3 Jun (1 ad) Trenton (MAG). **Black-crowned Night-Heron**: 20 Jun (2 ad) White L Refuge (WGC). **White Ibis**: 9-12 Jul (5 im) Moss Is WMA (WGC, Mike Todd); 15 Jul (1 im) President's Is (JRW). **Mississippi Kite**: 3 Jun (1) Trenton (MAG). **Sharp-shinned Hawk**: 26 Jun (1) Lake Co (Van Harris); 3 Jul (1 im) Memphis (Martha Waldron). **American Coot**: thru season (1) Horn L Cut-off, Shelby Co (JRW).

Plover - Tern: **Black-bellied Plover**: 1 Jun (1) Dyer Co (WGC), lrs. **Semipalmated Plover**: 4 Jun (2) Lake Co (JRW), lrs; 2 Jul (1) Ensley (JRW), ers. **Black-necked Stilt**: 4 Jun (155 ad, 31 nests) Lake Co (JRW); 7 Jun (pair, 4 yg) Robinson Bayou Rd, Dyer Co (WGC); 22 Jun (5) Bogota WMA, Dyer Co (WGC); thru Jun (161 ad, 68 nests) Ensley (JRW); 11 Jul (2 ad, 2 yg) Great River Rd, Dyer Co (WGC). **American Avocet**: 1 Jun (1) Dyer Co (WGC). **Spotted Sandpiper**: 3 Jul (1) Lake Co (JRW), ers. **Solitary Sandpiper**: 3 Jul (1) Lake Co (JRW), ers. **Greater Yellowlegs**: 10 Jul (3) Dyer and Lake Cos. (JRW), ers. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: 3 Jul (1) Lake Co (JRW), ers. **Upland Sandpiper**: 31 Jul (1) Ensley (JRW). **Sanderling**: 31 Jul (1) Ensley (JRW), ers. **Western Sandpiper**: 15 Jul (1) Ensley (JRW),

ers. **Least Sandpiper**: 2 Jul (7) Ensley (JRW), ers. **White-rumped Sandpiper**: 3-5 Jun (scattered small numbers) Shelby Co to Lake Co (JRW), lrs. **Pectoral Sandpiper**: 4 Jun (2) Lake Co (JRW), lrs; 10 Jul (5) Dyer and Lake Cos. (JRW), ers. **Stilt Sandpiper**: 10 Jul (2) Dyer Co (JRW), ers. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: 15 Jul (2) Ensley (JRW), ers. **Laughing Gull**: 3 Jun (1) Tipton Co (JRW). **Least Tern**: high water in the Mississippi R kept sandbars inundated, terns resorted to the margins of flooded fields and other "mainland" areas for nesting, where predation is very high. **Black Tern**: 2 Jul (3) Mississippi R, Shelby Co (JRW), ers.

Kingbird - Sparrow: **Western Kingbird**: thru season (19 active nests) Shelby Co (JRW). **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**: thru season (2 nests) President's Is (JRW). **hybrid flycatchers**: thru season (3 female Western Kingbird x Scissor-tailed Flycatcher paired with male Western Kingbirds nesting) Memphis (JRW, photos). **Loggerhead Shrike**: thru Jun (8 nests) Shelby Co (JRW). **Bell's Vireo**: 4 Jun (1) Lower Hatchie NWR, Lauderdale Co (JRW). **House Wren**: early Jun (5+ singing) Trenton (MAG). **Prairie Warbler**: 20 Jun (1) Shelby Farms, Shelby Co (Martha Waldron, SNM). **Lark Sparrow**: 21 Jun (1 ad, 1 im) separate Gibson Co sites (MAG).

Locations: Ensley, Shelby Co; Moss Is WMA, Dyer Co; President's Is, Shelby Co.; Trenton, Gibson Co; White L Refuge, Dyer Co.

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HIGHLAND RIM AND BASIN REGION - - Similar to last year the two-month summer season was very hot. In Nashville the average June temperature was 3.5 degrees above normal. July was even hotter with 27 days above 90 degrees. Although the high reached triple digits only once during the month, July proved to be one of the five hottest on record. Rainfall in Nashville was roughly average in both months, and many days were very humid.

Cormorant - Tern: **Double-crested Cormorant**: 7 Jun (53 nests) Duck R Unit (CF), at a new site. **ANHINGA**: 2 Jun (2 males, plus a female apparently at a nest) Percy Priest L (SGS), first indication of breeding in region. **Snowy Egret**: 4 Jun (nest with yg) Little Elder Is, Woods Reservoir, Franklin Co (Tim Jeffers). **Little Blue Heron**: 8 Jun (3) Poole Knobs, Percy Priest L (Terry Witt). **Broad-winged Hawk**: 31 May / 16 Jun (active nest, with 1 yg visible on latter date) Cheatham WMA, Cheatham Co (Daniel Moss). **Sandhill Crane**: 7 Jun - 13 Jul (3) Duck R Unit (CF). **White-rumped Sandpiper**: 4 Jun (5) Poole Knobs, Percy Priest L (Terry Witt). **Least Tern**: 7 Jun (1) Duck R Unit (CF). **Caspian Tern**: 21 Jun (5) Duck R Unit (CF).

Flycatcher - Oriole: **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**: 2 Jun (1) Duck R Unit (CF); 9-30 Jul (2 ad, 2 yg) Murfreesboro (Kristy Baker, m.ob.). **Loggerhead Shrike**: 6 and 8 Jun (18 total)

Lawrence Co (Tommy Edwards); 15 Jul (pair) near Elora, Lincoln Co (Phillip Casteel, Frank Fekel). **Lark Sparrow**: 12 Jun (1) Smyrna, Rutherford Co (SGS); 15 Jul (1) near Elora, Lincoln Co (Phillip Casteel, Frank Fekel). **Grasshopper Sparrow**: 27 Jun / 12 Jul (6 / 4) Warren Co (SNM). **Henslow's Sparrow**: 6 Jun (3) northern Lawrence Co (Tommy Edwards). **Dickcissel**: 27 Jun / 12 Jul (6 / 3) Warren Co (SNM). **HOODED ORIOLE**: 8-14 Jul (1 ad. male) near Elora, Lincoln Co (Eden Powell, photo), first state record, pending action of TBRC.

Locations: Duck R Unit - unit of the Tennessee NWR, Humphreys Co; Percy Priest L-Rutherford Co portion.

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CUMBERLAND PLATEAU / RIDGE and VALLEY REGION - - Temperatures were above average both months. July was the second warmest on record in the Tri-cities area, although no triple-digit readings were reached. Including August and September, the number of days with 90 degree temperatures fell just short of the record set last year. Rainfall was near normal in most areas.

A Swallow-tailed Kite in Bledsoe County continued the recent increase of reports in late summer and early fall. Two Northern Harriers were unexpected at this season. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers returned to two traditional nesting areas, with multiple pairs again in Bledsoe County. Savannah Sparrows were present in two counties, with breeding evidence noted in one. Dickcissel numbers remained high. The addition of summer reports from Bledsoe and Jefferson Counties brought the total up to eight counties in the region with Dickcissel reports since May. Bobolinks returned to a nesting site in Washington County.

Merganser - Owl: **Hooded Merganser**: 5 Jun (1) Marion Co (Tommie Rogers). **Double-crested Cormorant**: 10 Jul (5 nests) Rankin Bottoms (MBS). **"Great White Heron"**: 8 / 12 Jul (1) Hamilton Co (Burton O'Neil, photo), 3rd local record. **Great Egret**: 27 Jul (100+) Rankin Bottoms (MBS), max. **Little Blue Heron**: 27 Jul (10 im) Rankin Bottoms (MBS). **Black-crowned Night-Heron**: 1 Jun (1) Kinser Park, Greene Co (DHM); 27 Jul (32) Rankin Bottoms (MBS). **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**: 2 Jun (1 ad) Sweetwater, Monroe Co (DHM). **White Ibis**: 14-15 Jul (2-3 im) Yuchi Refuge, Rhea Co (fide SGS). **Osprey**: 5 Jun (1) Nolichucky R, Washington Co (RLK, Jacki Hinshaw); 13 Jun (1) Austin Springs, Washington Co (RLK). **Swallow-tailed Kite**: 20 Jul into Aug (1) Sequatchie Valley, Bledsoe Co (Katherine Boyles, m.ob.). **Northern Harrier**: 10 Jul (1) Rankin Bottoms (MBS); 16 / 20 Jul (1 ad female) Limestone (RLK). **Sharp-shinned Hawk**: 14 Jul (1) Paddle Cr. (JWC). **Peregrine Falcon**: 20 Jul (2) Limestone (RLK). **Semipalmated Plover**: 27 Jul (1) Rankin Bottoms (MBS), ers. **Spotted Sandpiper**: 24 Jun (1) Melton Hill Park, Knox Co (Carole Gobert), ers. **Solitary Sandpiper**: 10 Jul (1) Washington Co (RLK, DHM), ers. **Lesser Yellowlegs**: 23 Jul (1) Cocke Co (DHM), ers. **Least Sandpiper**: 26 Jul

(1) Washington Co (RLK), ers. **Barn Owl**: 12 Jul (1, roosting in cave entrance) shoreline of Melton Hill L, on Oak Ridge Reservation, Anderson Co (Kelly Roy); 20 Jul (1) Paddle Cr (Brookie Potter, Jean Potter).

Flycatcher - Siskin: **Acadian Flycatcher**: 10 Jun (1) Greeneville (DHM), unusual in suburban neighborhood at this season. **Willow Flycatcher**: 24 Jun / 6 Jul (1) Cleveland, Bradley Co (David Chaffin); 2 Jul (1) Minga Marsh, Sullivan Co (DHM). **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**: 4 Jun (pair, nest) South Pittsburg, Marion Co (Tim Jeffers); 24 Jun (7 at 4 sites) / 24 Jul (10 at 5 sites) Sequatchie Valley, Bledsoe Co (SJS, EKL / Dan Jacobson et al.). **Loggerhead Shrike**: 10 Jul (1 ad, 1 yg) Washington Co (RLK). **Warbling Vireo**: thru season (8-10 at 5+ sites) Washington and Sullivan Cos (RLK et al.). **Fish Crow**: 3 Jul (1) Ooltewah, Hamilton Co (David Stone, Clyde Blum). **Horned Lark**: 5 Jun (pair, female nest building, nest later destroyed by cultivation) Limestone (RLK). **Bank Swallow**: 5 Jun (2) Greene Co (DHM). **Swainson's Warbler**: 23 Jun (1) Cove Lake SP, Campbell Co (Carole Gobert). **Savannah Sparrow**: 19 Apr into Aug (6+ at 4 sites, with ads carrying food and recently fledged yg) Limestone and Conklin, Washington Co (RLK); 14 Jul (1) Paddle Cr (JWC). **Grasshopper Sparrow**: 24 Jun (12) Bledsoe Co (SJS, EKL). **Blue Grosbeak**: 24 Jun (18) Bledsoe Co (SJS, EKL). **Dickcissel**: thru season (12-15 at 5+ sites) Limestone (RLK et al.), present 16 straight years; 15 May - 17 Jul (5+ at 3 sites) Sullivan Co (RLK, RRB, JWC, m.ob.), first Co records since 1967; 12 Jun / 15 Jul (10 at 6 sites) Greene Co (DHM); 24 Jun (15) Bledsoe Co (SJS, EKL); 16 Jul (1) Jefferson Co (DHM). **Bobolink**: 3 May - 26 Jul (pair, 1 yg on 20 Jul) Conklin, Washington Co (RLK), present most years since 1998 at this site. **Pine Siskin**: 20 Jun (1, at feeder) Johnson City (Kathy Noblet).

Locations: Limestone, Washington Co; Paddle Cr, Sullivan Co; Rankin Bottoms, Cocke Co.

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EASTERN MOUNTAIN REGION - - Daily temperatures averaged about four degrees above normal for the period. Precipitation was slightly below normal. The Carter County Summer Bird Count was conducted on 4 June. The TOS Foray was held in Shady Valley on 10-12 June, the 50th anniversary of the first foray there.

Highlights for the period included a "Great White Heron" that spent several weeks on the Nolichucky River in Unicoi County. Most unexpected was a report of a pair of Northern Goshawks near Gatlinburg in mid-June. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found at three sites in northeast TNessee. A Swainson's Thrush was heard singing on Roan Mountain.

Merganser - Sapsucker: **Red-breasted Merganser**: 4 Jun (3 females) Watauga L, Carter Co (Tom McNeil). **Northern Bobwhite**: 18 Jun (3) Round Bald on Roan Mtn (Jacob

Socolar et al.). **"Great White Heron"**: 16 Jul into Aug (1) Nolichucky River, Unicoi Co / Washington Co line (Don Holt, m.ob., photos), 7th record in NE TN, and about 12th in the state. **White Ibis**: 17-21 Jul (1 im) Unicoi, Unicoi Co (Johnny Lynch fide Bryan Stevens, m.ob.), 1st Co record. **Osprey**: 4 Jun (1) Watauga L, Carter Co (Joe McGuiness et al.); 25 Jul (1) South Holston L (JWC, MSa). **Northern Goshawk**: 18 Jun (2 ad) Ogle Rd. near Gatlinburg, Sevier Co (Jim Peters), soaring and calling. **Red-shouldered Hawk**: 4 Jun (1) near Elizabethton (RRK, Glen Eller); thru season (pair) Holston Valley, Sullivan Co (Richard Lewis); scarce in northern portion of region. **Peregrine Falcon**: 4-29 Jun (1-3, including 2 im) Alum Cave Bluff, GSMNP (KDE / Ken Oeser / Shane Williams), indication of continued nesting at this site. **Caspian Tern**: 21 Jul (2) South Holston L (JWC). **Forster's Tern**: 25 Jul (1) South Holston L (JWC, MSa). **Mourning Dove**: 20 May - 22 Jul (1-4) Roan Mtn, at 5500 - 6100 ft (RLK, MSa). **Northern Saw-whet Owl**: 17 Jun (1) Roan Mtn (James Meehan, photo). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**: 2-18 Jun (1) Iron Mtn Gap, Unicoi Co (Scotty Myers, David Kirschke); 3 Jun (3) George's Cr, Carter Co (Scotty Myers); 28 Jun (1) Unaka Mtn (RRK, Gil Derouen, Reese Jamerson).

Flycatcher - Wren: **Acadian Flycatcher**: 20 May - 27 Jun (1) Roan Mtn, at 4040 ft (RLK), very high elevation. **Alder Flycatcher**: 18 Jun (10) Roan Mtn, Carver's Gap to Grassy Ridge (Jacob Socolar et al.), max. **Willow Flycatcher**: 10-12 Jun (12) Shady Valley (RLK, RRK, m.ob.), max. **Least Flycatcher**: 4 Jun (21) Carter Co, mainly at Roan Mtn (m.ob.); 10 Jun (1) Shady Valley (JWC); 11 Jun (1) Holston Mtn, Johnson Co / Sullivan Co line (RBB); 18 Jun (3) Iron Mtn Gap, Unicoi Co (David Kirschke). **Eastern Phoebe**: 4 Jun (1) Mt. Le Conte, GSMNP (KDE), at 6000 ft.; 27 Jun - 22 Jul (1) Carver's Gap on Roan Mtn (RLK); unusual at high elevation. **White-eyed Vireo**: 18 Jun (1) Round Bald on Roan Mtn (Jacob Socolar et al.), unusual at high elevation. **Brown Creeper**: 15 Jun (2) Unaka Mtn (RLK). **Sedge Wren**: 31 Jul (1) Orchard Bog in Shady Valley (MSa, Gary Cooper), new early fall date in NE TN.

Thrush - Siskin: **Swainson's Thrush**: 17 / 23 Jun (1, singing) NC side of Round Bald on Roan Mtn (Jacob Socolar et al. / SGS), 2nd summer record at Roan Mtn. **Hermit Thrush**: thru season (3-5) Roan Mtn (RLK, m.ob.), with 1 yg seen 22 Jul (RLK); 15 Jun (2) Unaka Mtn (RLK); 18 Jun (2) Mt. Le Conte, GSMNP (Ken Oeser); 9 Jul (1) near Clingman's Dome, GSMNP (KDE). **Brown Thrasher**: thru season (2) Carver's Gap on Roan Mtn (RLK), unusual at high elevation. **Magnolia Warbler**: 20 May thru Jul (1-4 males) Roan Mtn (RLK, m.ob.); 15 Jun / 12 Jul (3 / 2, males) Unaka Mtn (RLK, RRK). **Blackburnian Warbler**: 4 Jun (10) Carter Co (Tom McNeil et al.); 10-12 Jun (21) Holston Mtn and Iron Mtn Johnson Co (RBB, MSa, m.ob.). **Chipping Sparrow**: 14 Jun (2) Roan Mtn at 6100 ft (RLK), not found subsequently, unusual at high elevation. **Field Sparrow**: 2 Jun (1) Round Bald on Roan Mtn (RLK), unusual at high elevation. **Vesper Sparrow**: thru season (2-4) Round Bald on Roan Mtn (RLK, m.ob.), with 1 ad carrying food on 18 Jun (Jacob Socolar et al.); 10-12 Jun (1) Shady Valley (RLK, m.ob.). **Indigo Bunting**: 14 Jun - 22 Jul (2-3 males) Roan Mtn at 5500 - 6000 ft (RLK), unusual at high elevation. **Brown-headed Cowbird**:

25 Jun (1 female) between Newfound Gap and Clingman's Dome, GSMNP (Ron Hoff, Dollyann Myers et al.), unusual at high elevation. **Red Crossbill**: thru season (2-10) Roan Mtn (RBB, RLK, m.ob.); 24 Jun (1, at feeder) South Holston L (fide JWC, photo); 12 Jul (3) Unaka Mtn (RRK, Jim Anderson). **Pine Siskin**: thru season (2-6) Roan Mtn (RLK, m.ob.); 9 Jul (1) Clingman's Dome, GSMNP (KDE).

Locations: GSMNP - Great Smoky Mountains National Park; Roan Mtn, Carter Co; Shady Valley, Johnson Co; South Holston Lake, Sullivan Co; Unaka Mtn, Unicoi Co.

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